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ABOUT LEATHER

LEATHER  
IS  
IN  
OUR  
DNA  
SINCE 1948

**Chateau d'Ax**<sup>®</sup>  
MILANO



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OUR HISTORY

Over seventy years of  
experience  
in production.

Over seventy years of  
design and  
innovation in furniture.

Over seventy years of  
development  
in markets worldwide.

A great passion for work, attention to detail, traditional workmanship, a focus on quality and dedicated service are the values successfully cultivated over more than 70 years of business. A culture allowing Chateau d'Ax to develop products that continue to surprise, meet with success and create relaxing family home environments in more than 80 countries throughout the world.

Chateau d'Ax continues to be a leading edge brand, able to intercept and represent latest design, fashion and style trends through extremely high-quality products. Thanks to its long-standing experience and tireless research, Chateau d'Ax is able to satisfy the broadest range of styles, offering the typical quality of Made in Italy at affordable prices.



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OUR HISTORY

Our sofas  
are over one  
hundred thousand  
years old.

It is a question of history.

The first evidence of rudimentary clothing made from raw hide dates back to the Middle Palaeolithic period, to the times of Neanderthal Man.

Since then, leather processing has obviously come a long way. But what is more surprising is that modern tanning processes are fundamentally based on the discoveries made by our ancestors at the dawn of time.

The consistency, smell, shading and strength have always given this material an irresistible appeal, so that it has jealously preserved the same unique and exclusive aspect up until modern day. These are values that we have come to appreciate at Chateau d'Ax since 1948.

Recreating together the choice, processing and application of leather on sofas and armchairs helps us to fuel a 100,000-year-old passion and will help you all to discover a world of tradition and craftsmanship that is very much alive. Then as now.



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CHOICE OF LEATHER

# Only the best through natural selection.

There is no one single type of leather. Like any natural raw material, leather also has features that make it unique, differing from other leathers due to countless variables: from the breed of cattle, to the country of origin, type of pasture and diet.

Knowing how to choose leather, therefore, becomes a noble profession that calls for extensive experience acquired in the field. Chateau d'Ax was founded in 1948 and the seventy plus years of our history has given us a distinct edge, especially when it comes to choosing the hides.

Choosing only the best that the market can offer, for us means creating the highest quality products that we can guarantee with our eyes closed.

Time is what distinguishes high quality leather from the cheap variety. Use and wear test its resistance and "real" leather becomes softer and wears slowly revealing the underlying grain which enhances its beauty.

Thanks to our experience, we choose only the best first to enable our customers to choose well later on.



## CHOICE OF LEATHER

# Only the best through natural selection.

1,700. The number of square kilometres of leather that are tanned every year worldwide; a surface large enough to cover the cities of Milan, Paris and New York put together.

So how do we choose the best square metres for our sofas?

We could say that the very best cattle breeds are the Friesian, Angus and Hereford, plus all those shown on the map on these pages.

We could, therefore, play it safe by choosing only a few leather-producing countries and a handful of successful and trusted tanneries. In reality, the situation is much more complex. Choosing the best leather is a question of culture and a good eye. And both depend on our experience.





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CHOICE OF LEATHER

Only the best  
through  
natural  
selection.

One should always start from the concept that the raw material is natural. Like everything in nature, if love and respect are put into the care, the end product will be of high quality.

The pastures are, therefore, very important. If the animals are raised outdoors, with proper nutrition, cared for and protected from parasites, the hide obtained will be perfect, even in its imperfections.

Small scars due to rubbing against shrubs, the folds of fat deposits, insect bites, the entire life of an animal is reflected in its hide. And this is what gives the material a unique and inimitable value.



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LEATHER PROCESSING

# The marvel, step by step.

The process of producing leather follows a complex sequence of phases and processes steeped in age-old tradition and still dependent on the worker's manual skills.

The success of the processing and the increasingly higher quality of the finished product now also depends on advancements in technology and the use of state-of-the-art machinery.

The resulting leather is ready to match all the creativity of the Chateau d'Ax designers.



LEATHER PROCESSING

# The marvel, step by step.

## TANNING

The process of working leather is called tanning and aimed at transforming the leather into a hygienic, breathable and hard-wearing product.

There are several types: chrome tanning is the most common; vegetable tanning is the oldest and can take 30 days (slowly in tanks), or about 36-48 hours (quickly in drums).

## PRESSING

After the tanning process has been completed, the excess water is eliminated using a machine that exerts high pressure and then, relaxes the hide.

## SPLITTING

To reduce the thickness of the hide, the grain (the superficial part of the hide) is separated from the lower part (crust) through a mechanical operation.



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LEATHER PROCESSING

# The marvel, step by step.

## SHAVING

At this point, it is necessary to standardise and further reduce the thickness. Shaving ensures a uniform suppleness along the entire surface of the hide.

## DYEING

This is the key moment of the tanning process. The colours used for dyeing are natural or artificial lacquers.

## DRYING

The water content of the hide is further reduced through various systems: drying in the sun, vacuum, pasting, secoterm, overhead conveyors.

## REFINING

The final phase is the one that gives the leather its specific features: the degree of brightness, strength, suppleness, shine, resistance to dirt, water and scratches.



THE TYPES OF LEATHER

# Every leather has its purpose.

There are five main categories of leather with which it is possible to cover a modern or classic sofa.

## SUEDE

A leather whose grain side has undergone an abrasive treatment to produce a soft and velvety finish.

## CORRECTED LEATHER

A type of leather from which the top grain has been removed by abrasion. It is generally used when the grain has irregularities and it is necessary to recreate a new surface with different finishing procedures.



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## THE TYPES OF LEATHER

# Every leather has its purpose.

### **SPLIT LEATHER**

Tanning obtained with a single layer of a skin.

### **BRUSHED LEATHER**

A leather whose grain is uniformly smooth and shiny.

### **EMBOSSED LEATHER**

A leather normally with a raised pattern obtained by embossing. The pattern can be made in colour and obtained with lithography or screen printing.

### **PATENT LEATHER**

A leather with a shiny reflective surface, obtained by applying one or more layers of varnish, lacquer or starch, to colour it or give it a different finish.



OUR LEATHER SOFAS

A question  
of manual skill,  
pride  
and value.

SELECTING THE LEATHER

As described in the previous pages, each piece of leather is unique. Selection by the Chateau d'Ax experts has already taken place when the raw material is purchased. Now, however, a new selection is called for; the one for each individual sofa.

It is the design, composition and dimensions that dictate the rules.

If we talk about classic or modern style, a two or three-seater corner sofa, an electric or manual recliner, every single detail can influence the choice of the Chateau d'Ax artisans who, thanks to their knowledge, will already know which cover to use from the start.

Our collection of Chateau d'Ax leather sofas includes more than fifty models and around thirty different types of leather available in a wide range of thicknesses, textures and colours.





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OUR LEATHER SOFAS

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**CUTTING**

High-quality leather does not come cheap. The role of our cutting craftsmen is, therefore, crucial: even the smallest distraction is all it takes to irreparably ruin an entire piece of leather.

Care, experience, a steady hand and a good eye are called for!

After being selected, the piece of leather is carefully checked and adapted to the individual parts of the sofa.

It is then cut in a specific direction to keep the grain of the leather consistent and to ensure that, once stretched, it has a smooth and uniform appearance.



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**STITCHING**

A fascinating area of Chateau d'Ax is the sewing department.

The noise of the sewing machines almost resembles a symphony that accompanies the tailors and seamstresses in the painstaking task of recreating those handmade seams that are sometimes embellished and enhanced to be showcased and at other times expertly hidden.

In the sewing room, the products undergo additional inspection to ensure that the seams, zips and the direction of the texture are perfect.



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THE COVER

The leather has been cut and stitched.  
All that remains is to send it to the  
upholstery workshop for final assembly  
with the frame and padding.

Here everything must match perfectly;  
the leather must adhere perfectly to the edges  
and seats. The feet and pull-out and  
reclining mechanisms are also assembled.

The sofa has reached the final part  
of the production process and is prepared  
for final inspection.



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OUR LEATHER SOFAS

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THE FINAL INSPECTION

“Fà e desfà l'è tt un laurà” is a typically Milanese saying that means “doing and undoing, it's all work”.

We are Milanese, we are very pragmatic, we know that time is precious and rather than redoing the work, every step of the process is done in a workmanlike fashion. So meticulously, in fact, that the final inspection is a mere formality.

The final inspection, however, takes place just before packing and shipping. Each sofa is meticulously inspected one last time, under powerful neon lights that recreate daylight and dispassionately reveal even the slightest imperfection.

Thanks to the experience, proven workmanship and all the values that have always made Chateau d'Ax a producer of excellence, a fault is rarely found. The leather sofa is, therefore, ready to take its place in a new customer's life. Or in one of our many existing loyal customer's lives.



OUR LEATHER SOFAS

Our  
history within  
history.



32



1973

MELODIA



1952

CERVINO



33

today

1965

MATRIX

1984

STRESA











**Chateau d'Ax**<sup>®</sup>  
MILANO